

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You can tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English on HF and on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners can connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin can be downloaded from the League's website at www.sarl.org.za. You will find this bulletin and previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you can sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

We start this bulletin with the news that the doyen of EMC has become a silent key

It is with sadness that we have received the news that Eric Winter, ZS1EMC, passed away on 2 February 2017. Eric became ill a year ago while attending the CISPR meeting in Italy and had to return to South Africa where he was diagnosed with a life threatening disease. Eric was South Africa's most celebrated Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) expert. He represented the SABS at many international CISPR meetings. He was a strong opponent to Power Line Communication and supported the South African Radio League in its actions against it being introduced in South Africa. Eric will be sadly missed. As a mark of the respect and gratitude, the SABS TC73 meeting held in Pretoria this past week observed a minute of silence. Our condolences are extended to his wife and family.

PAUSE

In the news today,

SABS TC73 SUPPORTS THE SARL PROPOSAL TO STUDY INCREASE IN THE RF NOISE FLOOR

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

and

CLOSING DATE FOR SARL HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS IS 28 FEBRUARY 2017

Stay tuned for more on these and other interesting news items.

** The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) TC73 meeting, held this past week in Pretoria, accepted the South African Radio League proposal to study increases in the RF noise floor. Hans van de Groenendaal, ZS6AKV, and Leon Lessing, ZS6LMG represented the League. The Strategic Business Plan will be updated to include the League proposal and TC73 Workgroup 6 will be

tasked to study the problem. The League is planning a Saturday morning round table discussion at the National Amateur Radio Centre. More details will follow soon.

**** Nico van Rensburg, ZS6QL, the President of the South African Radio League has issued the following statement about the SARL Website Development.**

I wish to clarify the situation with regard to the League website. There have been a number of comments and statements made recently with regard to the League website. This statement serves to clarify the situation.

The current South African Radio League website is fully functional and serves the members as intended.

The Council is presently undertaking a review of the Information Technology systems used by the League to serve its members and the broader amateur radio community. Part of the review is to determine ways in which the League website and services on the website can be brought up to date and take advantage of the advances in the use of social media.

Council has established a working group to prepare a Requirements Specification setting out the South African Radio League IT requirements going forward. Council will consult with the Members before the specification is finalised and the go ahead given to begin the technical work of developing an updated platform.

In the meantime, I am pleased to advise that the Webmaster has been able to negotiate reduced hosting and service rates for the existing infrastructure until a formal project plan with the appropriate costing have been put in place.

**** The South African Radio League Amateur Radio Hall of Fame honours individuals who have made lasting contributions to Amateur Radio in southern Africa and aims to preserve its history. In 2016, League members elected nine inaugural members. It was decided to allow another batch of up to ten members this year, after which a maximum of two members will be inducted annually.**

Nominations for this year close at the end of this month. The Hall of Fame page is accessible from the League's home page. Over half a dozen nominations have been received. Several stalwarts of Amateur Radio did not make it in the initial round, in some cases because they had not been nominated. Let us ensure that all the Deserving get included, so that their contributions can be preserved for posterity.

With less than two weeks to the deadline, there is no time to waste. A nomination template is available on the League web site. The nominations already listed can be used as an example of what is required.

**** In an e-mail to the League President, Dawie Conradie, ZR6DHC, has asked to be relieved as Coordinator for the SARL News Team. The Council and the News team would like to thank Dawie for his hard work and dedication to the**

weekly SARL News. Dawie will continue his work as part of the Amateur Radio Today team.

Dennis, ZS4BS, will take over as the Coordinator for the SARL News Team. We now have a vacancy as bulletin compiler on Team 3. The work entails editing, compiling and translating the bulletin. If you are interested in joining the team, contact Dennis at zs4bs@netactive.co.za.

** Following on a very successful symposium on Software Defined Radio held in Gauteng towards the end of last year, a similar event will be presented by AMSAT SA on Saturday 25 March 2017 at the Bellville Campus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

The programme includes topics relevant to amateur radio and will provide some background on SDR. A practical approach of how to use readily available dongles in conjunction with your PC to set up a receiving system operational from the low MHz frequencies up to nearly 2 GHz will be described

To give attendees an insight into the development of such systems, some of the software available to perform this task will be demonstrated. Hardware availability suitable for the development of embedded systems required for standalone transmitters and receivers will be introduced. Looking at the rapid development of radio communication and the future challenges within this field of technology, it is of importance for young as well as established Radio Amateurs to keep abreast thereof.

** The South African Radio League Digital Contest will be run on Sunday 26 February from 13:00 to 16:00 UTC with activity on 80, 40 and 20 metres. The aim of the contest is to establish as many contacts as possible between radio amateurs in Southern Africa using PSK31 and RTTY modes. PSK31 is preferred at the lower end of the specified frequencies and RTTY at the upper end. Please note that USB must be used at all times. The exchange is a RST report and a sequential serial number starting at 001. See the 2017 Blue Book for all the information.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League. Did you show amateur radio to someone this week?

** Leon, ZR6LU, reports that conditions have been somewhat poor, but he has seen a spot or two from the demonstration beacon in Cape Town, operated by Peter, ZS1OA, to PI9ESA in the Netherlands on 20 metres. Locally Graham, ZS6GL, and Angus, ZS6GOO, are bashing the poor SARL receiver but rarely getting any further. Nic, ZR6AEZ, is picking up some nice spots with his band-hopper on rare frequencies (DK6UG on 18,106097 MHz) but it is also not fireworks. So maybe we should start putting up some receiver stations to help spot the overseas amateurs. This brings me to the Message of the Day... I have V3.12 of the firmware for the beacons available, which of course supports the receiver as well as the new 5 W amplifier. I can upgrade your chips anytime or if you are in a hurry, you can buy a blank chip and I will swop you out quickly

when we meet again.

** VHF activity is increasing around the country. In Cape Town, Mike, ZS1TAF has been running a net on 144,300 MHz SSB every Thursday evening for the past year or two. Recently the Coastal Radio Group operated a successful field station ZS1CRG on the Piketberg for the first time during the PEARS VHF/UHF contest and it was manned by Derrick, ZS1DUP, Shaun, ZS1HE, Keverne, ZS1ABU, and Dieter, ZS1DWH. The West Coastal Group, which included Charles, ZS1CF, and Tienie, ZS1HO, often work Koos, ZS3JPY at Kleinsee and as far north as Andre, V51LZ at Oranjermond. Andre, ZS3AG, at Kimberley has often heard traces of signals from the group and has been heard by Pieter, V51PJ.

Pieter, V51PJ, has hooked up with stations as far afield as Andre, ZS2ACP, and Andre, ZS2BK in Port Elizabeth, including Rickus, ZS4A, Bernie, ZS4TX, Christian, ZR6AUI and Paul, ZS6NK, on digital or analogue. Carl, ZS6CBQ, established a very successful net on 144,300 SSB some years ago on Saturday and Sunday mornings that covered Divisions 4 and 6. He has now added a new net on 432,200 MHz SSB during the same period. Hugo, ZS5HV, at Scottburgh, and Lee, ZS5LEE, in Durban, have joined a Monday evening net run by Peter, ZS2ABF, in East London with David, ZS5DJ, on 144,300 MHz SSB. It could later extend as far south as Port Elizabeth. Now that we are at the minimum Solar Cycle and DX on HF is declining, give VHF a try for a change, it is both a challenge and fun. So make an effort, join these VHF groups and help to advance VHF and amateur radio.

** Contest activity for March. On Sunday 5 March, the SARL Hamnet 40 m Simulated Emergency Contest will take place. Over the weekend of 11 and 12 March, you can participate in the SARL VHF/UHF Contest and if you enjoy CW, the RSGB Commonwealth Contest runs the same weekend. On the weekend of 25 and 26 March, you can participate in the CQ WPX SSB Contest.

** Did you enjoy the Field Day Weekend? The following log sheets have arrived at zs4bfn@mweb.co.za - Centurion ARC, ZS6CEN; Sandringham Scout Group ARC, ZS6SSG; Eddie, ZS6BNE; Jeugland Radio Club, ZR6JRC; Hugo, ZS2HR; Highway ARC, ZS5HAM; Dennis, ZS4BS; Johann, ZS4DZ; Roy, ZS3RW; Pieter, ZS6XT; Bruce, ZS5XT; Nic, ZR6AEZ; Kurt, ZS5KL, Geoff, ZR6XZ/1; Welkom Radio Club, ZS4WRC; Gerrit, ZS6DV; Stephan, ZS6SVJ, Eastern Cape Hammies, ZS2ZU, and Sandton ARC, ZS6STN.

Where are the logs of ZS6WR, ZS6ERB, ZS5NAK, ZS5HAC, ZS4SRK, ZS6PTA and others? The closing date is midnight CAT tonight, Sunday 19 February 2017. No late entries will be accepted.

** The closing date for your article for the March issue of Radio ZS is Wednesday 22 February. Thank you to the East Rand Branch for the article about their Field Day weekend. More such articles are welcome. Send your article in English or Afrikaans to radiozs@sarl.org.za

** In which time zone are we? There is discussion about the use of South African Standard Time or SAST, Central African Time or CAT or local time in the weekly bulletin. South Africa is in the time zone of UTC plus two, also referred to as Bravo time by the military, SAST, CAT or Eastern Europe Time (EET).

Burundi, Botswana, Libya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo use Central African Time. Egypt uses Eastern Europe Time and Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa uses South African Standard Time. Nevertheless, it is all the same time zone! Therefore, if you use local time, SAST, CAT or EET, you are correct!

** The West Rand Amateur Radio Club is hosting its next flea market on Saturday 25 February 2017, starting at 12:00 at their clubhouse in Kroton Street, Weltevreden Park, Roodepoort. Everybody is welcome. Bring your surplus and support the vendor on the day. For more information, contact Geoff, ZS6C, on mobile 082 546 5546.

** Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. None of the active regions visible on the Sun poses any threat for strong flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around seven. The 15 to 30 m bands will provide lots of DX fun. Please visit the website <https://spaceweather.sansa.org.za/> for further information.

Now for the diary of events

22 February closing date for Radio ZS articles 25 February West Rand ARC Flea Market 26 February SARL Digital Contest 27 February National Milk Tart Day and the next day we will celebrate National Heartburn Day 28 February closing date for SARL Hall of Fame nominations 5 March SARL Hamnet 40 m Contest 11 and 12 March the SARL VHF/UHF Contest and the RSGB Commonwealth Contest 25 March - SDR Workshop in Cape Town 25 and 26 March the CQ WPX SSB Contest

To end this bulletin, a recap of our main news item this morning:

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) TC73 meeting, held this past week in Pretoria, accepted the SARL proposal to study increases in the RF noise floor. Hans van de Groenendaal, ZS6AKV, and Leon Lessing, ZS6LMG represented the League. The Strategic Business Plan will be updated to include the League proposal and TC73 Workgroup 6 will be tasked to study the problem. The League is planning a Saturday morning round table discussion at the National Amateur Radio Centre. More details will follow soon.

** Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 4 895 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by ..

73 and 88, thank you for listening

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